



Population and Health

USAID/Riccardo Gangale



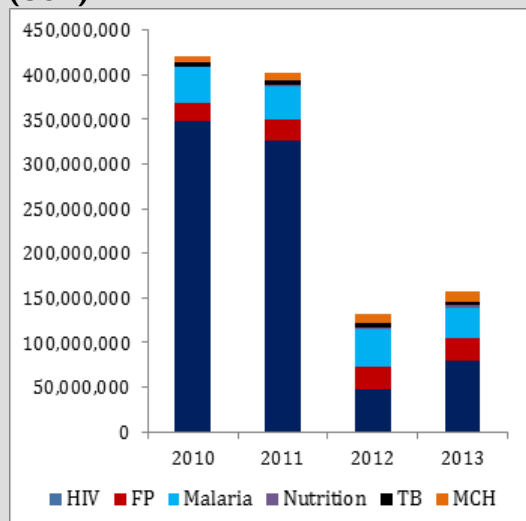
At the USAID-funded Mentor Mothers support group meeting in Sindu, Western Kenya, 29-year-old Nancy Aboke (left) contributes her opinion that breastfeeding is healthier for the baby and important for the baby's immunity. While some believe that replacement feeding might be a useful option for busy mothers, all agree that breastfeeding is the more affordable option.

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USAID budget support to health in Kenya (USD)



OVERVIEW

USAID invests in population and health activities to improve the survival, well-being and productivity of the Kenyan population—especially for poor, marginalized and underserved communities. USAID partners with the Government of Kenya at the national and county levels to reduce the burden of major infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and address the main causes of maternal and child deaths. This includes cross-cutting work to strengthen healthcare systems and capacity. It also includes supporting the national government to formulate key policies and guidelines while assisting counties to better plan, manage and finance quality health services to meet local needs.

USAID population and health activities support the goals of the Government of Kenya and empower Kenyans to be agents of transformation in their country. As health and human capacity in Kenya are sustainably strengthened, Kenyans will be better able to effectively participate in and contribute to the transformation of their governance and economy.

HIV/AIDS

In close partnership with the Government of Kenya, USAID works through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief to combat the AIDS epidemic in Kenya. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief in Kenya was launched in 2003 and represents one of the largest U.S. Government investments in HIV globally. USAID's HIV/AIDS program supports a wide variety of activities for prevention, care and support, and treatment in every county; it includes testing and counseling, management of strategic information, and other interventions. Such efforts have resulted in an increase in the number of people accessing treatment from 36,000 in 2005 to nearly 631,000 in 2013. HIV prevention activities promote behavior change among young people by emphasizing delayed sexual activity, the use of condoms, and reduced numbers of sexual partners. The prevention program is closely coordinated with counseling and testing activities. There are more than 5,800 testing sites in Kenya that reach the general population as well as groups who are most at risk. USAID's care and support program focuses on HIV care, orphans and vulnerable children, nutrition, home-based care, and combined tuberculosis/HIV services to ensure a continuum of care for HIV infected/affected individuals.

Tuberculosis

USAID/Kenya's support to the country's fight against tuberculosis ensures that drugs are delivered to health facilities to expand and enhance the national detection and treatment strategy. This support has helped Kenya surpass the World Health Organization tuberculosis targets of detecting 70 percent of the total estimated number of cases and successfully treating 80 percent of patients.

Family Planning and Maternal and Child Health

USAID has invested in family planning in Kenya for thirty years. The Government of Kenya has prioritized family planning in its development agenda. USAID support focuses on the following areas: increasing quality, access and utilization of services, procurement of contraceptive commodities, promotion of long-acting methods of contraception, and increasing demand for services and social marketing. USAID also provides assistance for advocacy and policy efforts, operations research and national surveys. The maternal health program improves the health of pregnant women and their newborns by increasing the use of antenatal services and skilled birth attendants. USAID is investing in procurement of essential equipment, improving the skills of health providers, and increasing demand for services through community health workers. In child health, USAID is supporting improved management of childhood illnesses especially diarrhea and pneumonia, increased coverage of immunization services, and improved infant and young child feeding practices. USAID is also providing technical assistance to the Kenyan Government to strengthen its leadership and oversight of the national maternal and child health program.

Health Systems Strengthening

The Government of Kenya in recent years has been implementing numerous health sector reforms with health systems strengthening at the core of the reform agenda. This work includes supporting the national government to formulate key policies and guidelines while assisting counties to better plan, manage and finance quality health services to meet local needs. Notable work is being carried out with the government and key training institutions to produce, hire, and retain skilled health workers especially for rural and hard to reach areas. This has included supplementing the Ministries of Health efforts to address critical staffing shortages by hiring more than 800 health workers, then transitioning them to government payroll. Other gains have been made through support to the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority in key areas such as governance, inventory management, warehousing and distribution.

Malaria

Tremendous progress has been made in malaria control in recent years. Large parts of the country have become free from malaria due to widespread distribution of long-lasting insecticide-treated bed nets and extensive household spraying. Nevertheless, malaria remains a leading cause of illness and death among children under 5 and the burden of malaria exacts a steep economic toll, with about 170 million working days lost due to malaria illness each year. Through the President's Malaria Initiative, USAID and other key United States Government partners support high-impact interventions in line with Kenya's national malaria control strategy. These interventions include purchasing and distributing insecticide-treated nets, indoor residual spraying, diagnosis with rapid diagnostic tests or microscopy, and treatment with artemisinin-based combination therapy.



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The U.S. President's Malaria Initiative procured over 6.5 million rapid diagnostic tests in 2013. Malaria diagnosis use to take hours – it now takes minutes.